



INSIGHT NEWSLETTER

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SOLID FOUNDATION DESPITE SHIFTING TIMES



This month has been a wild run with all the impacts of the Recent Iran War.

- **Dramatic Fuel Price Surges:** prices have skyrocketed due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz.
- **Operating Cost:** For fuel-dependent businesses like Farming and trucking expenses have doubled
- **Fertilizer Supply Chain Disruption:** The Middle East supplies approximately 42% of global urea and 27% of ammonia exports—critical agricultural inputs. The Strait of Hormuz closure has disrupted fertilizer shipments during critical planting seasons, causing nitrogen fertilizer prices to surge 25-50% since late February. This directly impacts agricultural retailers and farmers' input costs.
- **Widespread Fuel Surcharges:** supply chains, forcing agricultural and fuel retailers to absorb or pass along higher transportation costs.

Heartland Co-op is able to offer reliable products, solid contracts and agronomic solutions. At Heartland Co-op, our priority remains delivering outstanding operational service for our members and customers, despite ongoing challenges within the global industry landscape. We embrace change while staying true to our foundational values, we can respond effectively to shifting circumstances.

AGRONOMY DEPARTMENT

Article by Jason Danner



Happy belated Easter everyone! Hopefully everyone spent some time with family and friends and relaxed a little. March had a mix of hot and cold temperatures with no moisture, which gave us a perfect window to get a good handle on spring ammonia, get caught up on dry fertilizer applications and get ready for a busy planting season. Not a real surprise, but there have been a few fields of soybeans planted but majority are waiting for soil temperatures to reach and stay about 50 degrees.

April is normally unpredictable for weather conditions and temperatures. So far, it's held true. Majority of Iowa received roughly 4" + inches of rainfall over Easter weekend, with temperatures bouncing between upper 40's to high of 70's. Soybeans seem to be the winner with more growers planning to plant them first. Soybean plants seem to handle the cooler soil temperatures early which gives a longer vegetative growing period, one reason why yields are increasing. Corn germination is key to getting off to a good start. Germination and emergence are based off growing degrees days which can be calculated by the number of heat units accumulated each day called growing degrees units or GDU's. At certain GDUs, you can calculate what stage or development that crops should reach. That is how agronomists determine when to spray, what diseases to look for or what insects might be present.

There are variables that come into play and that is why we have summer interns to help us out to scout fields and inform us on field events. Summer interns will start mid-May, but currently we have two seed interns helping with organization and delivery of seed orders. What better way to figure out what you want to do or get a feeling of a company's culture than an internship. We appreciate the help and growers appreciate the extra attention. Thank you and be safe!!

- March's varied temperatures allowed for spring ammonia application and dry fertilizer prep, with most soybeans waiting for soil to stay above 50 degrees.
- April's unpredictable weather brought over 4 inches of rain to Iowa, with temperatures ranging from the upper 40s to high 70s; soybeans are favored for early planting due to their resilience in cooler soils.
- Growing degree units (GDUs) are crucial for crop development and management, with interns assisting in field scouting and seed order logistics.

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GRAIN DEPARTMENT

Article by Kade Mahler



War and weather will be the focus of the market for the coming weeks. At the start of the Iran conflict grains were following crude oil higher, however, as the war has dragged on the grains have started to deviate from oil and work lower.

War aside, the fundamentals are still rather bearish with no real weather /crop concerns in South America and ample world stocks. It will be important to see if the Trump visit to China remains as scheduled or if the recent US Naval blockade of the Iranian ports and a continuance of a hot war throw that meeting into question.

If relations with China continue to progress positively the outlook on beans especially for this upcoming crop year look bullish while corn still remains rather bearish.

- Grains initially rose with crude oil during the Iran conflict but have since diverged and declined.
- Despite the ongoing war, fundamentals are bearish due to favorable weather in South America and abundant global stocks.
- Positive US-China relations could boost beans' outlook, but corn remains bearish, contingent on geopolitical developments.



What location?

- a. Rhea
- b. Neola
- c. Traer
- d. Guernsey

SCAN ME!



Learn more about the location here



ENERGY DEPARTMENT

Article by Haley Schulte



DEF Quality Quick-Reference

Factor	Ideal Condition	Impact of Neglect
Storage Temp	12°F to 77°F	Heat leads to ammonia loss and degradation.
Sunlight	Shaded / Indoor	UV exposure accelerates shelf-life decay.
Materials	Stainless steel or HDPE plastic	Carbon steel or copper will corrode and contaminate fluid.
Handling	Dedicated pumps/hoses	Cross-contamination triggers engine sensors.

Maximizing Performance: The Essentials of DEF Quality

As more modern machinery hits the field, Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF) has become a standard part of the daily routine for today's farms. It plays a vital role in keeping your engines running efficiently and meeting emission standards without sacrificing power. Think of DEF as a precision input, much like the high-quality seed or fertilizer you select for your crops. Because it is a specialized mixture of 32.5% high-purity urea and deionized water, maintaining its integrity ensures your SCR (Selective Catalytic Reduction) system operates smoothly, allowing you to focus on the work at hand rather than troubleshooting engine codes.

Smart Storage for Maximum Shelf Life

The key to maintaining DEF quality is controlling the environment. Ideally, DEF should be stored in a cool, dry place out of direct sunlight. While it won't be harmed by freezing, high heat is its biggest enemy, as it causes the urea to decompose and the water to evaporate.

- **Temperature Matters:** At a steady 77°F, DEF maintains a shelf life of roughly 18 months. If stored in areas consistently above 90°F, that shelf life can drop to just 6 months.
- **Keep it Sealed:** Always keep containers tightly closed. This prevents evaporation and keeps out "hitchhiking" contaminants like dust and insects.
- **Dedicated Equipment:** Use only dedicated pumps and containers. Even a trace amount of minerals or petroleum from a reused funnel can interfere with the fluid's effectiveness.

Reliable Solutions for Your Farm

We know that managing fluid quality shouldn't be a headache. That's why we offer specialized DEF storage solutions designed to withstand the rigors of the farm while keeping your fluid pure. From UV-protected poly tanks to dedicated pumping systems that ensure a closed-loop transfer, we have the tools to help you protect your machinery and streamline your workflow. Stop by or give us a call to discuss how we can help you manage your DEF needs this season.

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CONSERVATION

Article by Ruth McCabe

As we head into planting season, the Conservation Team has been hard at work in the Beaver Creek and Lower Cedar watersheds! We've been surveying tile outlets for saturated buffers and oxbow wetland restorations and eroded riparian areas for potential grade stabilization structures or nutrient treatment wetlands. Some of Heartland's operations staff have seen us in the fields late into the evenings and on weekends. It's been fun to be out surveying and have a Heartland truck drive by honking at us as we're busy scrambling up and down creek banks. This is the season where we really feel the ONEHeartland spirit!



(Photo: Nolan watching the sunset after a long day of surveying, March 2026)

Wrapping up the survey season, our team has surveyed over 125 outlets in central and eastern Iowa this spring. We're now building concept designs for the survey data and turning everything over to our engineers so that we can make this work turn into water-cleaning realities! We'll show the preliminary designs to the landowners this summer and by this time next year, these saturated buffers and wetlands will be getting installed, making Iowa's water cleaner by every acre.

The team is also gearing up for field day season this coming summer. We've got a lot of fun field days planned, including a soil health field day at Randolph on July 7th, a conservation focused field day at the Fawcett Farm on July 28th, and a river float trip in the Lower Cedar Watershed on a date TBD in August. Stay tuned for more information about our field days and we hope to see you at some of them!



(Photo: Conservation team surveying with partner Watershed Coordinator in Beaver Creek on a pretty cold day in April 2026)



Contact the conservation team if you have any questions about cover crop cost share.

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FEED DEPARTMENT

Article by Garrett Billington



Heartland Co-op Feed Department is excited to announce that we are now dealers of Lindner Show Feeds.

In today's competitive show livestock industry, success in the show ring starts long before weigh-in day; it begins with a consistent, high-quality nutrition program. That's where Lindner Show Feeds continues to separate itself as a trusted name among serious exhibitors and livestock producers.

Lindner Show Feeds are formulated with a strong focus on digestibility, performance, and consistency. Each ration is carefully designed to support optimal muscle development, body condition, and structural soundness. Lindner products are backed by research and real-world results. One of the biggest challenges producers face is maintaining consistency from bag to bag. Lindner addresses this by sourcing high-quality ingredients and maintaining strict manufacturing standards. This reliability allows exhibitors to confidently manage feeding programs without unexpected setbacks.

No two animals-or operations-are exactly alike. Lindner offers a wide range of products that allow families, feeders, and producers to fine tune their feeding strategy based on goals, genetics, and stage of development. From early growth to final finish, there's a ration designed to help maximize each animal's potential. Show livestock require a balance of muscle expression, body composition, and eye appeal. Lindner Show Feeds are specifically built to help achieve that balance, giving exhibitors the tools they need to compete at the highest level.

Success in the show ring doesn't happen by accident. It's the result of attention to detail, strong genetics, and a dependable nutrition program. With Lindner Show Feeds, producers can feel confident they're giving their livestock the nutritional foundation needed to perform at their best.

Heartland Co-op will carry:

680 – 12% protein, 3.5% fat, .5% lysine, 6.5% fiber. Best fit for extremely heavy muscled pigs that will not tone down.

611 “Scud Missile” – 23% protein, 7% fat, 1.5% lysine. Great for the final push or anytime extra bulk and mass is needed.

632 – 20% protein, 5% fat, 1.4% lysine. Great option when needing more muscle and shape.

672 “Half N Half” – 18% protein, 6% fat, 1.2% lysine. 50/50 blend of 632 and 685. Great for middle stage of feeding period to maintain development.

685 – 16% protein, 6.5% fat, 1.0% lysine. Safe option that preserves show ready look. Blends great with 632 to grow and maintain or 611 to add more flesh.

686 “Shape & Guts” – 14% Protein, 8.5% fat, .8% lysine. Creates a soft and fresher look of heavy muscle pigs.

688 – 17% protein, 6.5% fat, 1% lysine. Supports all essential requirements for appropriate growth with a higher fiber level. Great option for breeding gilts.

690 – 15% protein, 3.5% fat, .7% lysine. Low fat, low protein, higher fiber option. Add feed volume without added calories. Ideal during holding periods to keep muscle/fat development in check. Great for easy fleshing, heavy muscle pigs.



Spring is here, and things are moving fast across Heartland. This is a busy season, and every interaction matters both for our member-owners and for each other. That’s why we’re spotlighting ACES, Around the Co-op, Everybody Sells. It’s a simple idea, but it’s at the core of how we operate and deliver a consistent experience every day.

Here’s what ACES looks like in action:

- **Every role counts:** Sales and service are everyone’s job. They show up in every call, delivery, application, and interaction.
- **Make people feel important:** Acknowledge customers and co-workers, answer questions clearly, and take the extra minute to get it right.
- **Do the job right, safely:** Slow down when needed, double-check equipment, and stay aware of those around you.
- **Support each other:** ONE Heartland is how we help each other across every location and every role.
- **Small actions matter:** Every positive interaction builds trust with our member-owners and strengthens the cooperative.

Keeping ACES top of mind this spring will help us serve our members better, stay safe, and finish the spring push strong.

Employee Anniversaries

First 40 hours

Isaac Gutierrez
 Jacob Dorrance
 Herman Marquez
 Matt Forney
 Wesley Kalinay
 Jason Meeks
 Kennedie Thomas

1 year

Ryan Finch
 Jeremy Vytlas

5 years

Nathan Chamberlain
 Walter Hermanson

20 years

Larae Jones
 Shane Illingworth

25 years

Wade Entriiken